Indian Sun Dance Draws Near Close

Indians Continue Ceremony to Appease Sun God

In a typical Indian setting and accompanied by the monotones of drums and quill whistles, more than 30 Ute Indian braves continued their annual ritualistic "sun dance" Wednesday night three miles southwest of Whiterocks on the Uintah-Ouray Indian reservation.

Indians from five states have gathered to witness the religious ceremony, given as a sacrifice to the sun god in hopes he will bless the tribes with favorable weather for their crops.

The performers circled the dance arena three times before going into their traditional tribal dance.

This will mean that the dance will end at sunrise Friday morning, July 10th. It is customary for the dancers to circle the arena once for each day they intend to dance.

The dancers are not permitted to eat until the ritual is over. Each of the performers has an attendant, who is equipped with a whip of willows which is used if the dancer shows any signs of weakening during the period.

In the center of the inclosure is a pole on which is mounted a buffalo head. The dancers prance from the outer rim of the circle to the center and back, sometimes wearing a path three or four inches deep.